CHAPTER XI

ARTS AND CRAFTS

517 It is not our purpose in this short chapter to attempt to describe systematically the crafts of the Veddas, this has already been done by the Sarasins and we shall, therefore, limit ourselves to touching on matters which especially interested us, or concerning which we have unrecorded information.

The arts and crafts of the Veddas are of the simplest nature, their belongings are few, and there is no certain attempt at ornamentation on any of these. Even personal adornment is so lacking that it may be disregarded. The highest artistic attainments of the Veddas seem to be their songs and invocations, and these, with their ceremonial dances, in which they may be said to have specialised, seem to have absorbed all that part of their mental energy which remains after providing for their daily necessities. There is no reason to believe that their artistic development was ever any higher than it is at the present day, when the only form of decorative art in which they indulge for its own sake, is rude drawing on rocks which we shall now describe[1].

ROCK DRAWINGS.

532 Figs. 1 and 2 of Plate LVI show rock drawings made by the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya at Pihilegodagalge and another cave near it. Since our return we have ascertained that other Veddas

[1] It is possible that a few individuals are pleased by simple geometrical patterns. These are traces of ornamentation on two of the pots shown in Plate LXII although this had avowedly been copied from foreign pots.